THE REGIONAL PLANNING LANDSCAPE

Approaching A Joint Work Program

At its last meeting, the Committee requested a review of current programs. This also summarizes what I've learned since arriving a month ago. Thus far, I've met with all but two members of the Committee, with staffs of the two agencies, and with a number of related organizations, included the Air Quality District staff, BCDC staff, the Bay Area Council staff, the League of Women Voters, the Urban Land Institute, and the Transportation and Land Use Coalition. I am planning to meet with SPUR, the Sierra Club, Urban Habitat, the Greenbelt Alliance, the Silicon Valley Manufacturers' Association, and the Home Builders' Association.

It goes without saying...
but it goes better with saying

Much of this presentation will seem to cover the obvious, but I want to cover the basics to ensure that we share a common understanding and that we start building this program together from a common base.

If you can't say anything nice...

don't worry about it.

If I have misunderstand something or missed the point, don't be shy about telling me.

WHY REGIONAL PLANNING?

- Interdependence
 - Bay area resident may
 - · Live in one jurisdiction, but
 - · Work in another, and
 - · Recreate and shop in others
- Sharing
 - We share
 - · An air basin and water sheds,
 - An economy,
 - Transportation, communication and institutions
 - The Bay
- Expectations
 - Residents and businesses expect us to get it right and make it work.

The latest survey from the Public Policy Institute of California suggests that people in the Bay Area are not very satisfied with our performance thus far.

If we just had better regional planning...

- Less congestion
- · Shorter trips
- Less pollution
- · More affordable housing
- More accessible open space
- · Less decay of older areas
- Stronger economy
- Better job opportunities for existing residents
- · Less tax poaching
- More fiscal capacity
- More cooperation
- More rationality

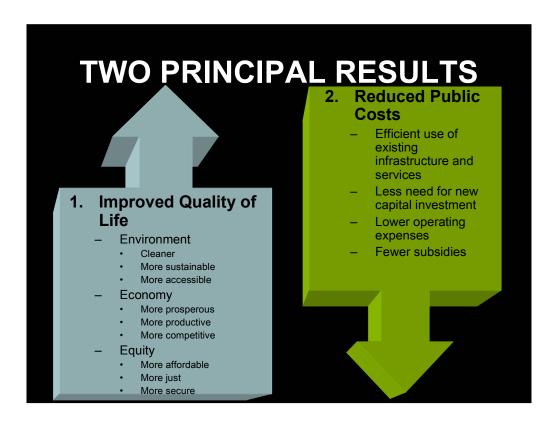
In the absence of a shared regional plan, we tend to squeaky wheels, engage in log-rolling, and aggregate local desires rather than make regional choices.

In any one year, 99% of the region is already in place.

Over 30 years, we can influence new growth equal to 1/5 of the region...

...But only if we know what we want to do and have the right tools.

Number of households is a proxy for the size of region and for annual growth. Our ability to meet expectations in the short term is very limited. We are working at the margins, and this is a long-term process. There will be local victories, consistent with long-term regional interests, but a noticeable effect on the region as a whole is years away.



The triple "e"s are from the Bay Area Alliance work.

REGIONAL PLANNING PARTNERS

- · Association of Bay Area Governments
- Metropolitan Transportation Commission
- · At least three other regional agencies
- 9 counties
- 101 cities
- Nearly 30 transit providers
- Over 1000 special-purpose districts
- State and Federal agencies
- Real estate developers, bankers and investors
- Neighboring regions
- 7 million people

This is a "hearts and minds" exercise and everyone needs to buy in to some degree to be truly effective over any reasonable period of time. Proceeding with significant opposition will eventually lead to confrontation and setback.

It's going to take more than two agencies working together

Necessary, but not sufficient

And a merger would not substantially improve the probability of success.

Regional Planning does not equal "Smart Growth" Necessary, but not sufficient

Smart growth will not, by itself, address affordability, nor will it ensure the protection of specific environmental assets

Smart Growth does not equal Transit-Oriented Development

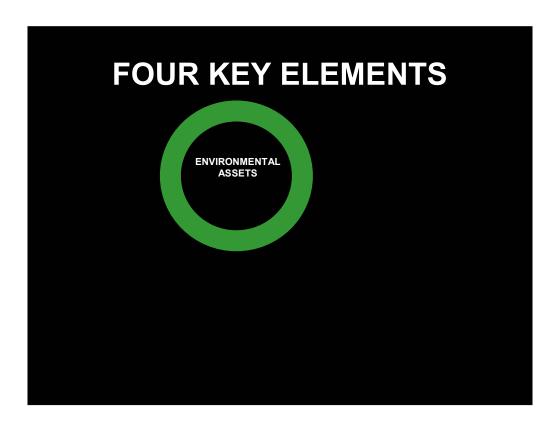
Necessary, but not sufficient

More than TOD will be required to produce compact development and reuse of our declining inner areas.

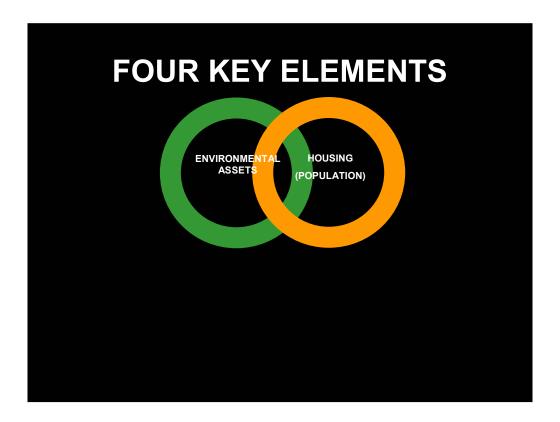
The Current State of Coordinated Regional Planning

Four key factors that are typically considered in almost all regional planning exercises.

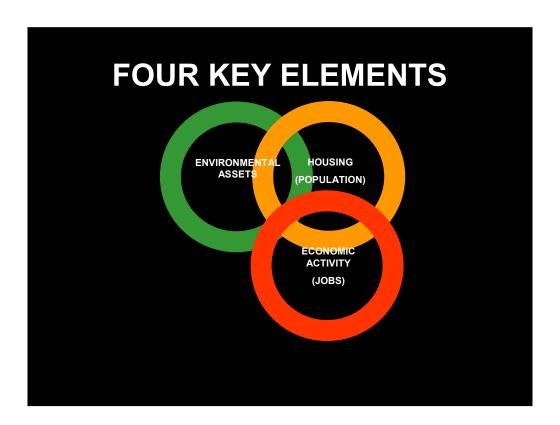
FOUR KEY ELEMENTS



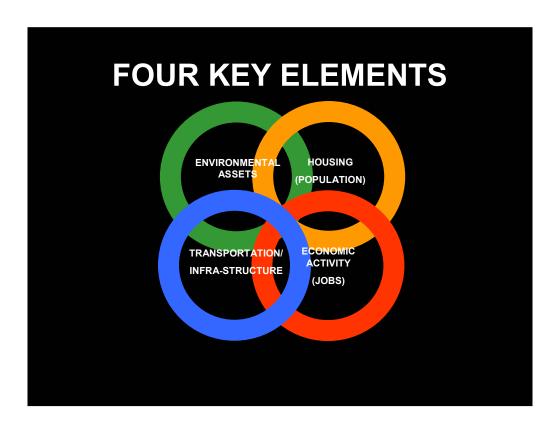
This is what we start with and frequently constitute the defining features of the region: e.g., the bay, the hills.



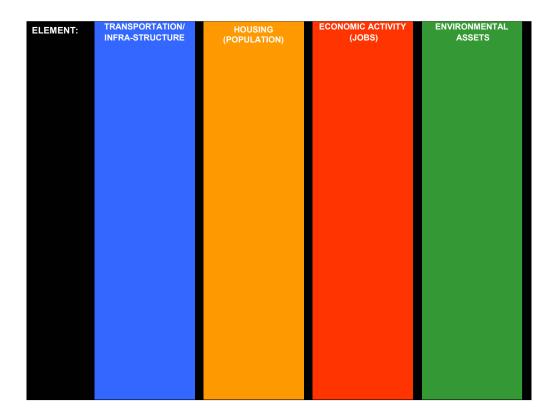
Then we inhabit the environment.



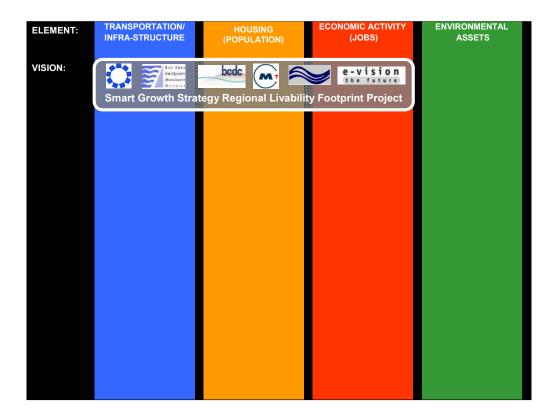
And we start making a living and selling things, frequently in different locations than where we live.



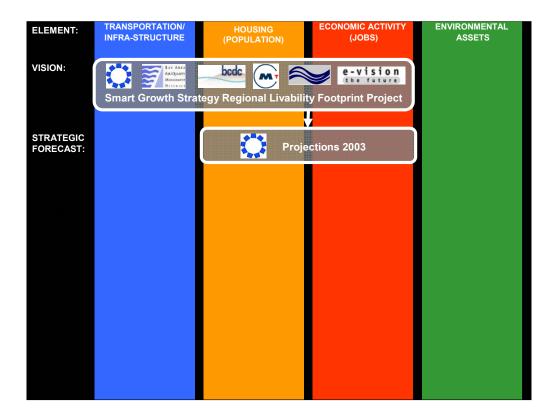
We connect these elements with a transportation system and serve them with other urban infrastructure.



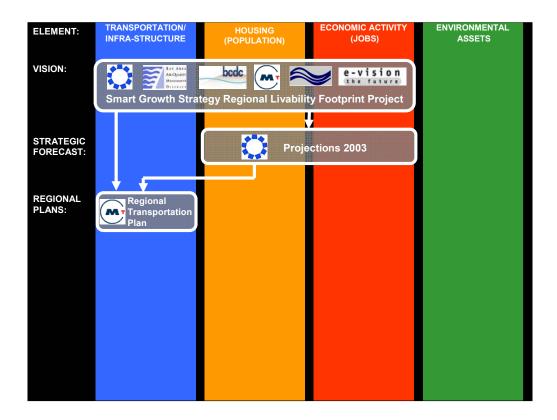
Now, let's look at current regional planning activities relative to the four elements.



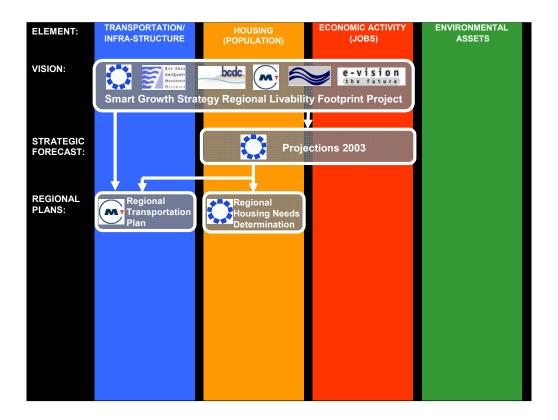
The vision was produced by a multi-organization partnership nearly two years ago.



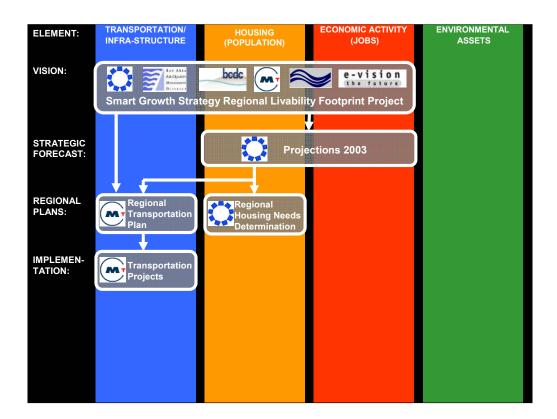
ABAG then did its projections based on a combination of the footprint and an assessment of reality. The Forecast is both a projection and a target.



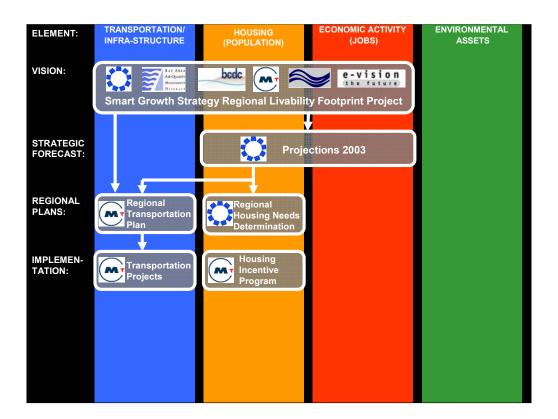
Both the vision and the resultant forecast feed into the development of the regional transportation plan, along with a lot of other considerations. The plan is a great balancing act, but has impact far beyond its nominal transportation objectives. It is the most important and most influential single regional planning instrument.



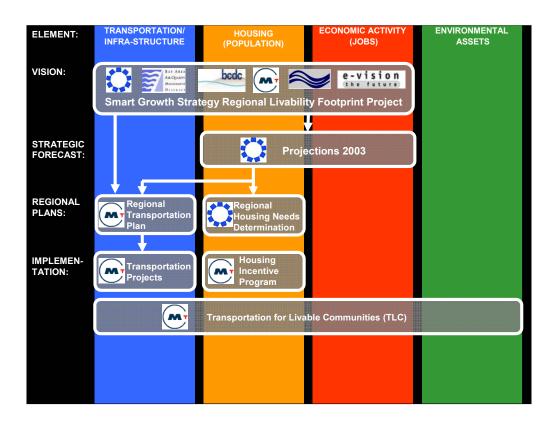
Paralleling the transportation plan, but not nearly as influential is ABAG's allocation of housing needs. The last allocation was driven by purely empirical projections. The next allocation may be driven by the policy targets embedded in Projects 2003.



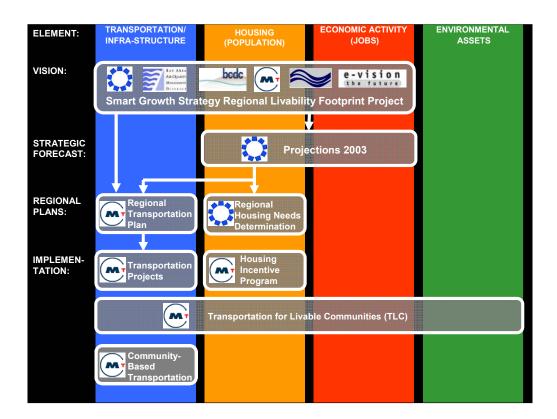
Now we move from planning to implementation and again the most substantial and influential implementation occurs in the transportation sector.



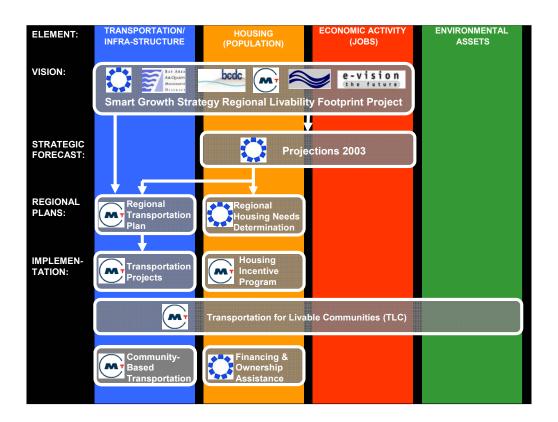
Small grants for housing in association with transportation projects



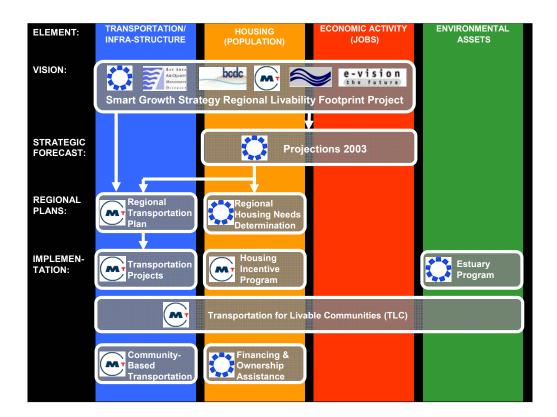
TLC grants support a variety of local improvements in association with transportation projects.



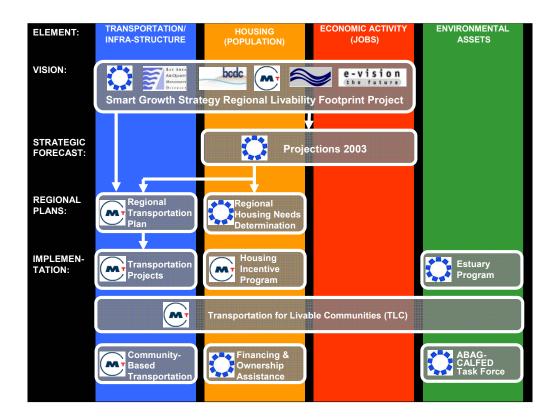
Equity concerns dealt with by MTC's Community Based Transportation program including Lifelines



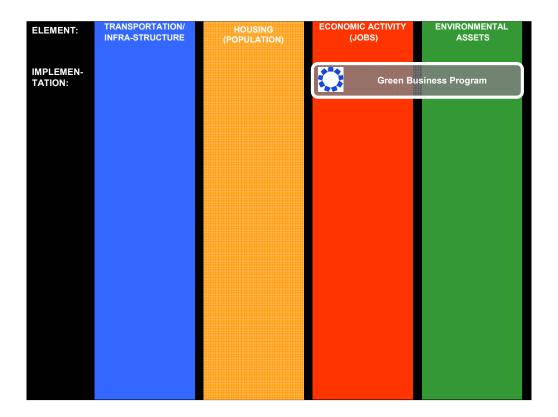
And by ABAG's programs to assist housing financing and home ownership



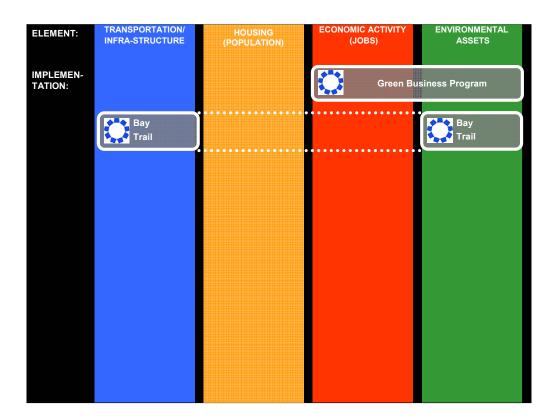
In environment, there are a number of specific programs, including the Estuary Program which grew out of an EPA initiative



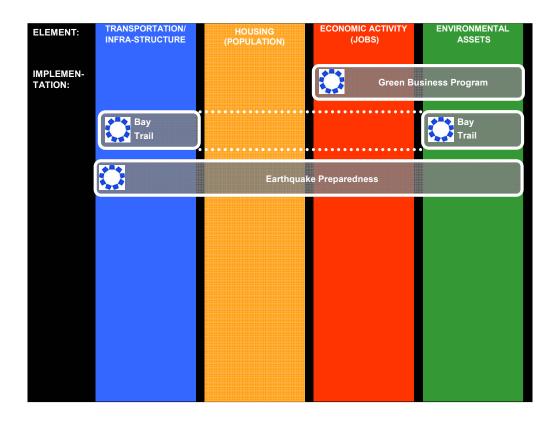
ABAG-CALFED, which deals with Delta and watershed issues



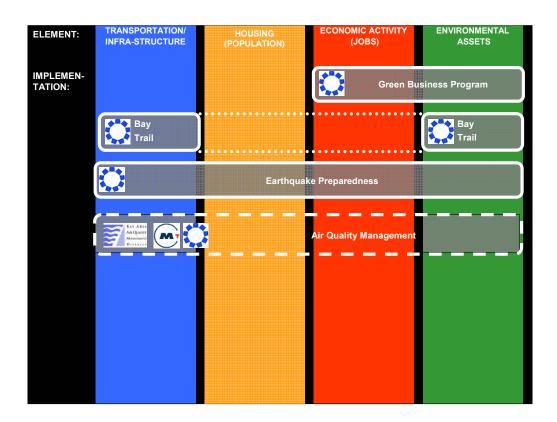
Green Business Program which promotes environmentally responsible practices.



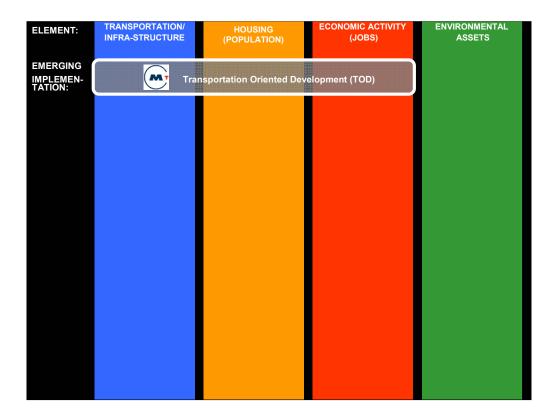
Bay Trail makes region's most significant and unique environmental asset accessible for recreation.



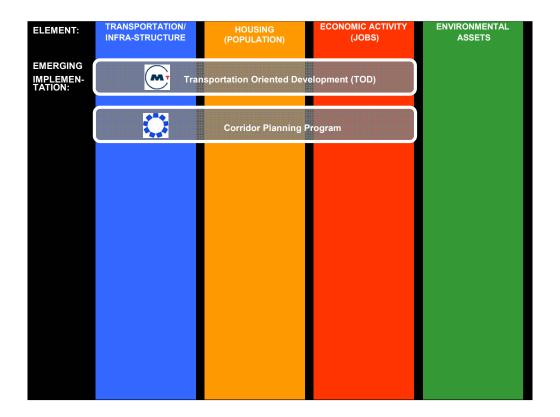
There is also multi-sector contingency planning



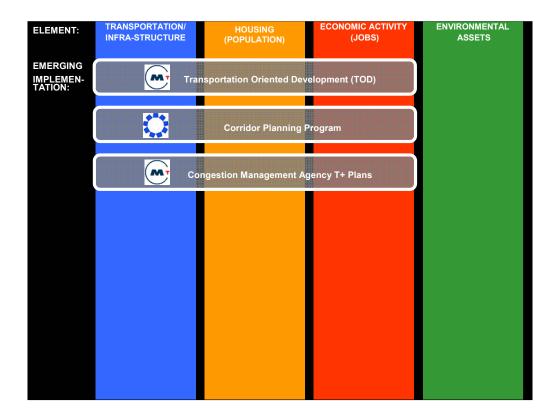
And the two agencies participate with BAAQMD in air quality management.



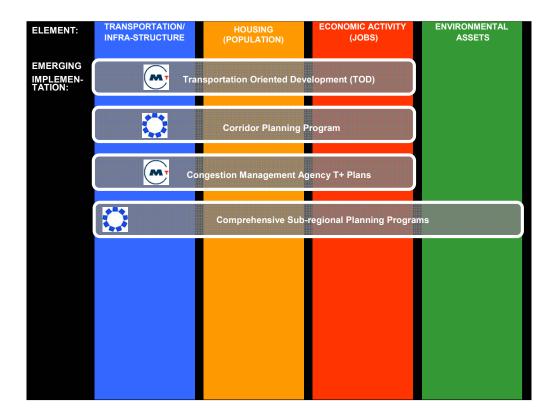
Emerging implementation includes transportation-oriented development, which has concentrated primarily on station area development. Program to make future extensions contingent on compatible development, as well as infill around existing stations.



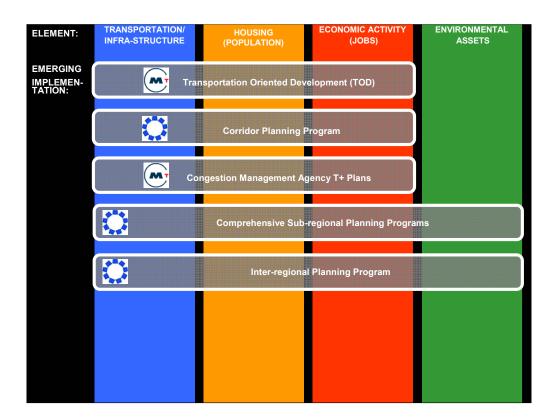
ABAG has a complementary program which is looking at theming and intensifying major corridors such as San Pablo and 14^{th} Street.



MTC has given grants to each of the Congestion Management Agencies to pursue the transportation/land-use connection.



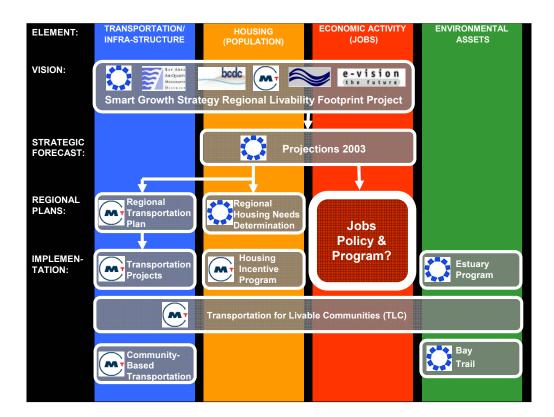
ABAG has been working with localities on sub-regional plans.



And there has been nascent activity recognizing the spillover into adjacent regions. Very popular program, but may be a recognition of short-comings of within-region planning.

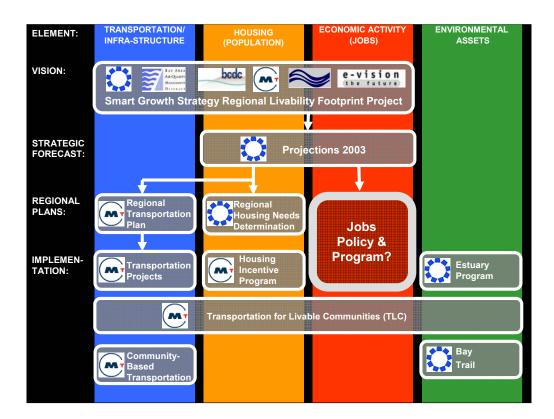
Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)

Looking at this landscape, here are some areas that give me and others some concerns.



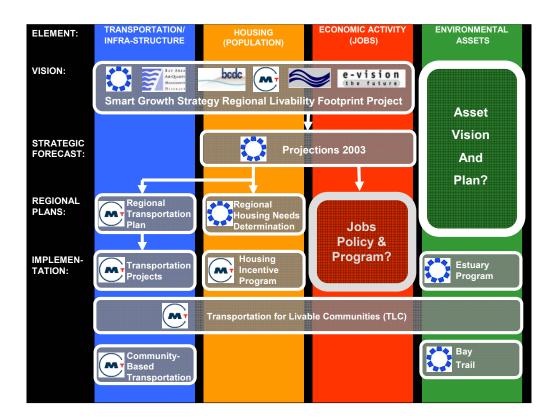
At least two other big regions in the U.S. look separately at employment distribution as a policy variable that can be leveraged, and it was one of two principal variables in Vancouver.

- Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)
- Effectiveness of regional housing allocation



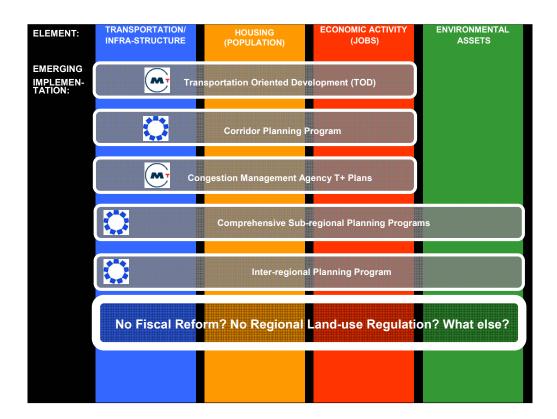
Unrealistic and accomplishes little or nothing on the ground. Reforms pending in state legislature, but these look like patches to me. The region may want to take a much more aggressive stand on what it wants to do with housing.

- Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)
- Effectiveness of regional housing allocation
- Explicit vision and plan for environmental assets.



Treating environmental assets, particularly open space, as a residual makes all equally valuable, which is clearly not the case.

- Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)
- Effectiveness of regional housing allocation
- Explicit vision and plan for environmental assets (open space)
- Completeness and effectiveness of implementation package



Some big levers are off limits. This may require that we concentrate on softer implementation, which may not be all bad.

- Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)
- Effectiveness of regional housing allocation
- Explicit vision and plan for environmental assets (open space)
- Completeness and effectiveness of implementation package
- Buy-in to vision

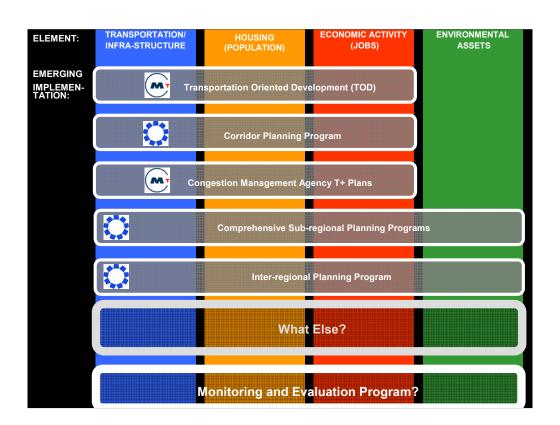


Vision is not particularly bold, difficult to image, and is seen to have been developed by narrow cross-section of the community. It has also been virtually dormant for two years.



Compact for Sustainable Communities provides broader vision, but is seen by many as top-down motherhood...Lacks legitimacy and traction of more grass roots footprint project.

- Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)
- Effectiveness of regional housing allocation
- Explicit vision and plan for environmental assets (open space)
- Completeness and effectiveness of implementation package
- Buy-in to vision
- Knowing whether we are making a difference





This work provides a good basis, but we may need more focus for transportation/land-use strategy.

- Regional plan and program for economic activity (location of job growth)
- Effectiveness of regional housing allocation
- Explicit vision and plan for environmental assets (open space)
- Completeness and effectiveness of implementation package
- Buy-in to vision
- · Knowing whether we are making a difference
- Supportive state policy and legislation

A coordinated legislative agenda may be required to replace patch-work quilt of individual issue-driven legislation.

Uniqueness of the Bay Area

This isn't Columbus

This is a special place, and our planning needs to reflect that.

Work Program Principles

- · Build on what we have
 - Maintain momentum
 - Do not reinvent the wheel
- Emphasize tangible achievements
 - Make a real difference on the ground
- Identify tasks before responsibility
 - Worry more about what needs to be done than who should do it
- · Link tasks to vision
 - Build the Cathedral one brick at a time
- · Promote and reinforce the vision

General Work Program Approach

- 1. Accept vision
 - Acknowledging imperfections and limited scope
 - Treating as "living" document that will grow and change
- 2. Review, refine and support implementation underway
- 3. Identify and pursue other low-resistance implementation measures
 - Best practices
 - Voluntary regional interest statement
 - Award program
 - · Aggregation of general plans
- 4. Use vision as basis for review and comment on regionally significant projects
 - Regional Clearinghouse

General Work Program Approach

- 5. Investigate feasibility and acceptability of more difficult implementation measures; build cases as required
 - · Incentives, disincentives
 - Fiscal reform
 - Breaking down regulatory barriers: CEQA, construction defect
- 6. Promote, test, refine and expand vision through implementation and monitoring
 - Keep it alive and lively through active communication
- 7. Investigate feasibility and desirability of filling in policy and implementation gaps
 - Employment distribution
 - Significant open space protection